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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

CIRCULAR LETTER

OF

Instructions to Officers of the Treasury Department,

RELATIVE TO

COMMERCIAL INTERCOURSE, CAPTURED, ABANDONED,
AND CONFISCABLE PROPERTY, FREEDMEN, ETC.

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CIRCULAR LETTER.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
June 27, 1865.

The various rules and regulations heretofore prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury, in regard to the above named subjects, having been rendered nugatory in whole or in part by the changed condition of affairs in the southern States and Executive orders and proclamations, and the War Department having assumed charge of freedmen, abandoned lands, &c., under the provisions of the act of Congress approved March 3, 1865, the following instructions as to the duties of officers of the Treasury Department in the premises are prescribed, and will be regarded as in full force and effect immediately on the receipt thereof by any officer whose action is in any wise affected thereby:

1. All restrictions on commercial intercourse in and with States and parts of States heretofore declared in insurrection, and on the purchase, transportation, and sale of the products thereof, are removed; *except* as to the transportation thereto or therein of arms, ammunition, articles from which ammunition is made, gray uniforms, and gray cloth; and *except, also*, those relating to property heretofore purchased by the agents or captured by or surrendered to the military forces of the United States. Nor will any fees or taxes be charged or collected except those imposed by the customs and internal revenue laws. And the supervision necessary to prevent the shipment of the prohibited articles will be exercised only by the regular and ordinary officers of the customs, acting under the revenue laws of the United States.

2. Subordinate officers discharging duties in regard to commercial intercourse, under the regulations referred to, will consider their official connection with this Department as terminating with the 30th instant, without farther notice.

3. Agents for the purchase of products of insurrectionary States on Government account will close their official business, east of the Mississippi, with the transactions of the 13th instant; and west of it, with the transactions of the 24th instant; returning to sellers all property or money received or collected since those dates, respectively, and using such dispatch in the premises that their connection with the Department may, if possible, terminate with the 30th instant.

4. Officers of this Department charged with the duty of receiving and collecting, or having in their possession or under their control, captured abandoned, or confiscable personal property, will dispose of the same, in accordance with regulations on the subject heretofore prescribed, at the earliest time consistent with the public interests, and will refrain from receiving such from military or naval authorities after the 30th instant. This will not be construed, however, as interfering with the operations of the agents *now* engaged in receiving or collecting the property recently captured, by or surrendered to the forces of the United States, whether or not covered by or included in the records, &c., delivered to the United States military or Treasury authorities, by rebel military officers or cotton agents. Those so acting will continue to discharge the duties thus imposed until such property is all received or satisfactorily accounted for,

and until the amount so secured is shipped or otherwise disposed of under the regulations on the subject, heretofore prescribed. And they will use all the means at their command, with the utmost vigor, to the end that all the property so collected, captured, or turned over shall be secured to the United States with the least possible cost and delay.

After the 30th instant, the duty of receiving captured and abandoned property not embraced in the above exception will be discharged by the usual and regular officers of the customs, at the several places where they may be located, in accordance with regulations relating to the subject; and officers heretofore performing that duty will give them all the aid and information in their power to enable them to carry out the same.

5. Officers of this Department charged with the care or supervision of, or having in their possession or under their control, any abandoned or confiscable lands, houses, and tenements, will turn them over to a duly authorized officer of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, so far as they may be required or demanded by the same, together with all moneys, books, records, and papers arising from or relating to the property so turned over, taking proper receipts or vouchers therefor. This rule will also govern the action of all agents of this Department connected in any way with the care of Freedmen, etc., so far as it may be applicable.

And all persons asking for any information in regard to the property so turned over, or for the release of the same, or for the release of any proceeds or moneys arising therefrom, will be referred to the Commissioner of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, at Washington, to whom communications on the subject should be addressed.

6. Officers of this Department having in their possession or under their control any moneys whatever arising from fees collected under the commercial intercourse regulations, (except those collected for the benefit of freedmen, which will be disposed of under section 5,) or from the sales of captured, abandoned, or confiscable personal property, will forthwith deposit the same with the nearest Assistant Treasurer, Designated Depository, or Deposit Bank, (keeping the amounts from the different sources separate,) to the credit of H. A. RISLEY, Esq., Supervising Special Agent, &c., taking therefor receipts in quadruplicate—which receipts must show whence the sums were received—one of which will be retained by the officer so depositing, one forthwith sent to the Secretary of the Treasury, one to the Commissioner of Customs, and one to Mr. RISLEY, at Washington.

7. All officers above referred to, except proper officers of the customs, acting exclusively under the revenue laws, will, after they have closed their official business, as above directed, and sold at auction, to the highest bidder, the furniture and property remaining on hand, and accounted for the proceeds of the same, forthwith systematically arrange the books, records, papers, etc., of their late office, that they may easily be referred to and examined, pack them in secure and water-proof boxes, and forward the same, so marked as to indicate their contents, together with their respective resignations, addressed to the Secretary of the Treasury, Washington City.

HUGH McCULLOCH,
Secretary of the Treasury.



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